

**PLANET M
RECORDS**

Jeanne Velonis, accordion



Melia Watras: 3 Songs for Bellows, Buttons and Keys

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Jeanne Velonis, accordion

Melia Watras (b. 1969)

3 Songs for Buttons, Bellows and Keys

for accordion (2021)

- ① **From...** 2:34
- ② **More or Leslie** 2:20
- ③ **Lawn Flamingos of Doom** 2:13

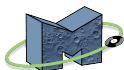
World premiere recording

Total time = 7:07

Recorded by Jeanne Velonis May 24, 2022, in the Woodgrove Lab,
Dobbs Ferry, NY

Cover artwork by botanicalLightning

@botanicallighting on Instagram



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PMR-004

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Program Notes

I first met Jeanne Velonis in the early 2000's. At the time, I was the violist of the Corigliano Quartet, while Jeanne was (and still is) the longtime assistant for Grammy-winning producer Judith Sherman. We have since collaborated together on many solo and ensemble recordings over the years, allowing me the opportunity to get to know Jeanne's warm personality, sharp ear and consummate musicianship.

After Judy and Jeanne worked on a recent album of my compositions, Jeanne asked me if I had ever written for her instrument — the accordion. What a joy to explore the intriguing sound profiles of this instrument with her!

3 Songs for Bellows, Buttons and Keys is dedicated to the all-around marvelous Jeanne Velonis. As a complete set, the pieces are performed in the order listed below. Each work may also stand alone, or in different combinations.

From...

More or Leslie

Lawn Flamingos of Doom

My thanks to Jeanne for introducing me to the world of bellows, buttons and keys.

—Melia Watras

Biographies

Jeanne Velonis, accordion

Jeanne Velonis is an accordionist, recording engineer, and producer, with a particular interest in contemporary music. Initially self-taught, she has studied accordion with Leah Barkan and Mary Tokarski, and made her performance debut on the accordion in 2009 at Carnegie Hall in a performance of Terry Riley's "In C" curated by the Kronos Quartet, after which she joined a symphony orchestra and started taking lessons (in that order). She is a member of the Bachtopus Accordion Ensemble, a regular performer at the Accordion Seminars and Masterclasses, and has served on the Composers Commissioning Committee of the American Accordionists' Association. She has worked on hundreds of albums in the various roles of engineer, producer, editor, mastering engineer, and performer. In 2020, she released a solo album of three 21st-century drone-based accordion pieces by NYC composers, *New York Dronescape*.

Melia Watras, composer

Melia Watras has been hailed by *Gramophone* as “an artist of commanding and poetic personality” and by *The Strad* as “staggeringly virtuosic.” As a violist, composer and collaborative artist, she has sustained a distinguished career as a creator and facilitator of new music and art. Watras has released 8 albums, while performing on 13 others as violist of the Corigliano Quartet. As a composer, her music has been heard on National Public Radio’s *Performance Today*, and can be found on the albums *String Masks*, *Firefly Songs*, *Schumann Resonances* and *26*. Watras’s adaptation of John Corigliano’s *Fancy on a Bach Air* for viola is published by G. Schirmer, Inc. and can be heard on her *Viola Solo* album. She is currently Professor of Viola at the University of Washington School of Music, where she was awarded the Adelaide D. Currie Cole Endowed Professorship, the Donald E. Petersen Endowed Fellowship and the Royalty Research Fund.